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SUBJECT: THE DELAWARE/T&T PARTNERSHIP: TRANSFORMATIONAL DIPLOMACY IN ACTION

¶1. SUMMARY: Delaware Governor Ruth Minner's recent visit to T&T under the auspices of DOD's State Partnership Program was extraordinarily successful. The Delaware/T&T partnership should serve as a model not only for expanding military to military relationships but for effecting transformational diplomacy of the best sort in a civilian context. In the case of Delaware and T&T, reciprocal visits, joint military training and collaborative planning on shared problems and interests such as crime prevention, drug interdiction, disaster preparedness and response and education refute the popular Caricom view that the US ignores the Caribbean region. In addition, this and other state partnerships can be effective tools for expanding the foreign affairs constituency within the US and consequently increasing public support for US foreign policy goals. END SUMMARY.

¶2. The September 12 to 15 visit to Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) by Delaware Governor Ruth Minner and members of her administration was the latest outcome of a program which appears to be a model of transformational diplomacy. The visit was undertaken under the auspices of the State Partnership Program, an initiative founded in 1993 by the National Guard Bureau, a component of the US Department of Defense (DOD). The program, which pairs up State National Guard elements with countries around the world, is primarily designed to foster and encourage military-to- military relationships, but also makes funds available for broadening state/country contacts and activities over time through the promotion and inclusion of military/civilian exchanges and even civilian/civilian programs and initiatives.

¶3. Delaware's partnership program with T&T got underway in July 2005 and has thrived beyond either partners wildest expectations. Whereas many state/country partnerships never progress beyond the military-to- military relationship, the Delaware/T&T partnership has broken through that psychological barrier already. In less than 15 months, over a dozen "engagements" have taken place. These have included orientation visits to T&T by senior Delaware National Guard officers and reciprocal visits to Delaware by high ranking officers of the T&T Defense Force. Exchange visits have taken place by Delaware and T&T officials responsible for port security as well as by teams charged with emergency management and disaster response and preparedness. Other engagements have focused on engineering topics, on reserve force training, on air operations and air guard development, and on senior non-commissioned officer (NCO) leadership development. In a government-to- government exchange, a delegation from the GOTT Ministry of National Security has visited Delaware; and, in an initiative designed to boost cultural ties, the T&T Defense Force Steel Orchestra has even performed in Delaware.

¶4. Governor Minner was accompanied by an impressive array of both military and civilian officials from her administration, including the Delaware National Guard Adjutant-General, National Guard Army and Air Force Chiefs of Staff, the State Attorney General, Director

of Homeland Security and Director of Budgets and Management, among others. They called on the President, the Prime Minister, The Minister of National Security, The Minister of Education and the President of the Senate, and observed the Upper House of Parliament in session. Governor Minner took a helicopter tour of the Point Lisas Industrial Estate, the engine of T&T's oil/gas-driven economy, while the military members of her delegation visited the headquarters of the T&T Defense Force.

15. In their one-on-one exchanges with GOTT officials and in round table discussions, the Delaware visitors laid plans for Delaware/T&T collaboration in the areas of national security and counter-terrorism, particularly as these relate to the Cricket World Cup Tournament to be hosted by the Caribbean nations in March/April 2007; drug interdiction; drug demand reduction; criminal rehabilitation; education; and natural disaster preparedness and response (Note: both Tobago and Delaware have suffered hurricane damage in recent years). In addition, plans are afoot to have small law enforcement units undergo reciprocal training in Delaware and T&T. Finally, in Tobago, the hub of T&T's tourist industry, the Delaware delegation discussed with local officials the possibility of establishing a Delta Airlines link between Delaware and Tobago's own International Airport by way of Atlanta (Note: Delta is scheduled to inaugurate regular non-stop flights between Atlanta and Trinidad's International Airport on December 1).

16. At a reception for the Delaware delegation hosted by the Minister of National Security, the warmth of the relationship between the Delaware delegation and the GOTT Officials was palpable, matching the substantial reciprocal benefits which both parties recognize have already flowed and will continue to flow to them from this partnership. According to Major Jason Schrank who serves as the Traditional Commander Activity (TCA) Coordinator at post, the lion's share of the funding for the Delaware/T&T partnership comes from Southern Command as well as partially from DOD's National Guard

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Bureau and Delaware's State Treasury. However, the GOTT made a substantial contribution to cover the cost.

17. COMMENT: According to Major Schrank, the majority of the countries in Southern Command's area of responsibility participate in DOD's State partnership program. However, the Delaware/T&T partnership is generally regarded as one of the most dynamic in the region and one bringing great synergistic benefits to both partners. In addition, post believes that this partnership fulfills a number of other bilateral and broader foreign policy objectives: it is a prime illustration of transformational diplomacy in action; it is one more example which helps us counter Prime Minister Patrick Manning's recent criticism that the US has tended to ignore T&T and the Caribbean region; and the state partnership program, if implemented as effectively as the Delaware/T&T partnership, can serve as an important tool for increasing public support for US foreign policy goals. END COMMENT.